

ODINPUBAFRICA: DEVELOPMENT OF AN AFRICAN REPOSITORY FOR ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS

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Communication between scientists has always been realized through publications in scientific journals. The Internet has an enormous impact in the way the scientific literature is distributed. Scientific publishers have adapted themselves quickly to this new medium. The major commercial publishers like Blackwell, Elsevier, Springer, Kluwer, Wiley and others have brought their collections of journals to the Internet. But the Internet also gives the opportunity to create alternative ways to enhance communication between scientists and to make the scientific results available to colleague researchers.

The reasons that researchers and their institutions are working on alternative ways of publications are:

- Scientific journals are becoming very expensive, while some publishers are trying to monopolize this market. This evolution endangers the way scientists get access to the literature.
- Communication through scientific journals can be very slow. It can sometimes take more than a year before an article is published.
- Universities and research institutes are discovering the importance of managing the scientific output of their own collaborators.

The most common new publication formats are open access journals and repositories. The success of subject repositories as ArXiv and RePEC paved the way for the development of institutional repositories. The development of the exchange protocol OAI-PMH leads to a decentralized network of institutional repositories and centralized harvesters/search engines, which makes the decentralized information accessible through a limited group of focus points.

The development of the Internet and of repositories specifically creates opportunities for developing countries to start up their publication network. Therefore at the ODINAFRICA-II review workshop in Brussels (September 2002) the development of an e-repository project for marine science in Africa was proposed as a complementary activity to ODINAFRICA-III. The Government of Flanders accepted this project in the FUST-program for a two-year period starting in the August 2004.

With this project a platform will be created to make publications in marine science from scientists affiliated with ODINAFRICA institutes available electronically.

The ODINAFRICA repository¹ will collect the scientific output of ODINAFRICA institutes on an open-access web server. In the evolution of scientific publication it will be important to have a management and control tool for the institutes' own scientific output. A repository can be such a tool too.

General objectives

OdinPubAfrica has the following main objective:

- Development of an OAI-compliant² repository providing access to full-text publications created by scientists affiliated to ODINAFRICA institutes and managed by their libraries and information centres.

The creation of the OdinPubAfrica repository will have the following immediate and direct advantages:

- Make scientific publications of ODINAFRICA institutions more easily and freely accessible to the African Ocean (and coastal area) research and management community, which will enhance the internal scientific communication;
- Facilitate publishing of research findings by African scientists (e-journal as well as e-archive) thereby promoting African research and increasing access by African scientists to the international research forum.

To realize this service a central web server with repository software will be installed and hosted at LUC (University of Limburg - Belgium) during the project phase. After the ending of the project Odinafrica III and IOC will make decisions about how the web hosting will be continued.

The input of electronic publications will be a task of the institutes of ODINAFRICA. This will be done through Internet connections. The organization of this repository will be realized in accordance with the needs of the individual institutes.

¹ A repository deals with the scientific production of a(n) (group of) institution only. In the first place it is a way to make the own scientific publications available to the own community and to other interested scientist.

A repository is not an electronic library. In an e-library all material relevant to a community is collected. The storage of all these documents on a library server cannot be realized as a result of the limitation enforced by copyright and author right laws. An electronic library will use search tools for electronic accessible documents (commercial publishers and open access document collections). Through the repository the own scientific output can be managed and made electronically available.

² The OAI – protocol is a standard for metadata exchange. By conforming to this standard the local databases can be searched through specific search engines for scientific information (e.g. OAIster – Scirus).

Content of the OdinPubAfrica Repository

The repository will ONLY cover content of African authors working in an affiliated institution or non-African authors working in an ODINAFRICA affiliated institution.

The intent of the project is to have as wide a scope as possible. Different sorts of documents, grey literature and commercially published papers can be collected as long as they have a scientific significance.

- Articles: an article evolves in its lifecycle from the author's version (preprint) to a journal version (refereed) to a postprint version (adapted author's version). The journal version is not available most of the time, because of copyright limitations. Therefore pre- or postprint versions of an article will be archived in the repository in the first place. If possible a journal version can also be included. Institutional journals can be integrated as a separate collection in the repository, if they are free of any copyright restriction.
- Scientific reports (annual, regular) - project reports
- Theses
- Technical progress notes (unrefereed)
- Conference papers

There is a lot of interesting legacy material available that is worth converting to an electronic format. To make this material electronically available will be an important task for the project. But at the same time new publications cannot be neglected, because these documents represent the latest scientific research in marine science in Africa. Not yet published articles, African journals with their articles, new reports, conference papers etc., all are welcome in the *OdinPubAfrica* repository.

The sort of documents which have to be excluded are administrative reports, PowerPoint presentations etc.

The goal of the project is to make the documents in the repository freely available for the general public. Only in specific cases can a limitation of access be installed.

OdinPubAfrica for all ODINAFRICA partners

All the institutes of ODINAFRICA are invited to participate in the project. In the first place scientist are invited to deposit their articles and publications.

We need all the help of the directors and managers in the different institutes to realize this project. They can stimulate their researchers to deliver their publications in the repository. Also they will be the persons to define a repository policy for their institution.

They will have to define what sort of documents will be collected and how to install the internal workflow necessary to collect the publications.

Librarians and information managers will also play an important role. They will be responsible for the collection of the documents and the standardisation to the electronic format. The upload of the documents in the repository will be their task. Finally they will be responsible for the management of the institutional collection.

The **OdinPubAfrica** repository is created to make available and to preserve the publications of ODINAFRICA institutes. The repository can also help to protect the author's rights. Therefore a deposit agreement will be made between repository and author.

The next two points will be essential in this agreement.

- The delivered publication has to be copyright free before it can be included in the repository.
- The author keeps the copyright. E.g. the author can publish his article in a journal of his choice. But the document will not be removed from the repository, without specific reasons.

A general copyright policy for ODINAFRICA will be worked out. This will contain guidelines about copyright agreements with publishers and support in resolving copyright problems.

This document describes the general policy of the *OdinPubAfrica* project. In this framework the different ODINAFRICA partners can implement their own way of working. The information managers will be invited on a training session to introduce them to the Odinafrica repository environment and to help them to set up the document collections for the institute.

You will find *OdinPubAfrica* at <https://doclib.luc.ac.be/odin>.